

Water:
Its Spiritual Significance



Rivers, ponds, lakes and streams. They have different names but all contain water. Religions have different names, but all contain truth.

Muhammad Ali, US boxer (1942 -)
Louisville, Kentucky



“Ohio” is the Iroquois word for “fine” or “good” river.



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Edited by
Elena Lloyd-Sidle and Gray Henry-Blakemore



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I sailed up a river in a pleasant wind
New lands, new people, and new thoughts to find;
Many fair reaches and headlands appeared,
And many dangers were there to be feared;
But when I remember where I have been,
And the fair landscapes that I have seen,
THOU seemest the only permanent shore,
The cape never rounded, nor wandered o'er.

Thoreau's dedication in
A Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers



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An ancient people tells us that when the moment of a great teacher's death was near, the disciples said, "What is it we will see when you are gone?" And the master said, "All I did was sit on the river bank handing out river water. After I'm gone I trust you will notice the water."

Recounted by Joan Chittister in
The Rule of Benedict: Insight for the Ages,
New York: Crossroad, 1997, p. 137



Dedication

We dedicate this book to our friends who,
this summer, returned to their Maker,

Ewert Cousins, Thomas Berry and Carmen Blacker